

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 243384

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TO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 243384

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 243384 DTG 120022Z OCT 75 SENT ACTION  
CINCPACREP GUAM INFO CP PENDLETON FT CHAFFEE INDIANTOWN GAP

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 243384

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJ: PLAN FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS HANDLING OF VIETNAMESE  
REPATRIATION FROM GUAM

FOR SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR FROM IATF

THE FOLLOWING IS RECOMMENDED IN REGARD TO HANDLING OF  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASPECTS OF REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE  
REFUGEES ON GUAM.

I. GENERAL. IN KEEPING WITH THE POSITION WE HAVE TAKEN  
SO FAR, OUR HANDLING OF THE ACTUAL PROCESSING, BOARDING  
AND SUILING OF THE REPATRIATES SHOULD BE AS LOW-KEY AS  
POSSIBLE CONSISTENT WITH THE NECESSITY TO PUT ACROSS THE  
BASIC HUMANITARIAN NATURE OF OUR EFFORT. TO THE EXTENT  
POSSIBLE, THE ACTUAL UNDERTAKING SHOULD BE SEEN AS THE  
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REPATRIATES THEMSELVES. HOWEVER, IT  
IS CLEAR THAT SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION WILL BE THE  
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PAGE 02 STATE 243384

USG'S RESPONSIBILITY.

II. PRESS ACCESS. THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS WILL BE THE PRIMARY OUTSIDE OBSERVER OF THE OPERATION AND SHOULD BE GIVEN AS COMPLETE ACCESS TO, AND INFO ABOUT, IT AS POSSIBLE. THIS SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, BE ARRANGED TOO CLOSELY OR CLEARLY BY THE USG. MEDIA ACCESS TO THE REPATRIATES' WISHES. WE SHOULD PROVIDE WHATEVER FACILITIES ARE NECESSARY, E.G. PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE REPATRIATES IF THEY WISH. HOWEVER, NO OFFICIAL AMERICANS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN ANY SUCH PRESS CONFERENCE.

THE SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR SHOULD NOT HOLD A FORMAL PRESS CONFERENCE HIMSELF. HE OR HIS DESIGNATED SPOKESMAN SHOULD, NEVERTHELESS, BE AVAILABLE TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC PRESS QUESTIONS AS THEY ARISE AND SHOULD PROVIDE ON A BACKGROUND BASIS ALL NECESSARY TECHNICAL INFO (ON THE VESSEL, CAMP CONDITIONS, ETC.) WHEN ASKED.

III. MEDIA ACCESS TO SHIP. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE MEDIA BE ALLOWED ACCESS TO THE SHIP WELL PRIOR TO SAILING, IN ORDER TO HELP VERIFY ITS NON-COMBAT NATURE AND SEAWORTHINESS. THIS SHOULD BEGIN AND END WELL BEFORE THE BOARDING OF THE SHIP BY THE REPATRIATES. IN NO EVENT SHOULD THE PRESS BE ALLOWED ABOARD THE SHIP WITH THE REPATRIATES. A CLOSE CHECK ON PRESS ACCESS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN ORDER TO PREVENT STOWAWAYS OR OTHER UNACCEPTABLE PRESS ACTIVITY.

IV. COUNSELING OF REPATRIATES. THIS IS LIKELY TO BE ONE OF THE MOST SENSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION. IT IS HOPED THAT COUNSELING WILL PROCEED QUIETLY UNTIL ALL REPATRIATES WHO WISH TO GO ARE ON BOARD THE SHIP. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE OUT-PROCESSING, IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT THE PRESS WILL LEARN OF IT BEFORE THIS. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT IT, THE SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR OR HIS SPOKESMAN SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SAY THAT AS PART OF THE OUT-PROCESSING WE ARE CONFIRMING WITH EACH REPATRIATE OR HEAD OF FAMILY HIS DESIRE TO BOARD THE VESSEL. SHOULD THE PRESS ASK TO OBSERVE THIS PROCESS, IT SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO SO ON A LIMITED CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 243384

BASIS. ANY REPATRIATES WHO OPT TO REMAIN BEHIND SHOULD NOT BE EXPOSED TO THE PRESS. WE SHOULD INDICATE THAT THEIR CASES WILL BE REFERRED TO THE UNHCR FOR APPROPRIATE FURTHER ACTION.

IF COUNSELING PROCEEDS WITHOUT ATTRACTING PRESS ATTENTION, ON DEPARTURE WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO INDICATE IN A LOW-KEY FASHION THAT STEPS WERE TAKEN TO CONFIRM THE

VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE OF EACH REPATRIATE OR HEAD OF FAMILY. WE CAN POINT TO THE SIGNED PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT AS WELL AS TO INDIVIDUAL SIGNED WAIVERS AND ORAL CONFIRMATIONS OBTAINED DURING OUT-PROCESSING. PRESENCE OF NEUTRAL OBSERVERS, I.E. AMERICAN RED CROSS PERSONNEL, SHOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED.

V. CREMONIES. THERE SHOULD BE NO FORMAL SEND-OFF CEREMONY AT DOCKSIDE. THE NUMBER OF USG PERSONNEL SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THOSE NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THE OPERATION ONLY. THE SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR SHOULD OF COURSS BE PRESENT BUT SHOULD DISCOURAGE HIGH GUAMANIAN OFFICIALS AND OTHER LOCAL DIGNITARIES FROM ATTENDING.

VI. ROLE OF WASHINGTON AGENCIES. THE MAIN POINT OF CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA WOULD BE THE SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR IN GUAM. IATF WOULD RESPOND TO GENENEERAL QUESTIONS IN WUSHINGTON AT THE SAME TIME BUT WOULD REFER DETAILEF INQUIRIES TO GUAM.

ONCE THE SHIP HAS SAILED, IATF WILL ISSUE A BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE PRESS HERE INDICATING THIS. THE STATEMENT CITED BELOW WILL BE REPEATED BY VOICE OF AMERICA AND ON THE USIA WIRELESS FILE. VOA AND UIUA WILL ALSO GIVE APPROPRIATE NEWS COVERAGE OF THE EVENT, BASED ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA STORIES AND OTHER AVAILABLE MATERIAL. NO PICTURES OF THE SHIP OR THE OPERATION SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE USG, SINCE THIS SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY COVERED BY THE MEDIA. FURTHER PRESS INQUIRIES ON THE OPERATION SHOULD BE HANDLED IN ROUTINE FASHION BY THE DEPT OF STATE.

VII. MONITORING OF VESSEL. ONCE THE SHIP IS ON THE HIGH  
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PAGE 04 STATE 243384

SEAS, USG RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OPERATION WILL END (UNLESS THE SHIP RETURNS). THE USG WILL PROVIDE NORMAL SEARCH AND RESCUE MONITORING OF THE VESSEL'S PROGRESS, USING ESTABLISHED MARITIME PROCEDURES, BUT WILL NOT PROVIDE ANY AIR OR SEA ESCORT. IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC INQUIRIES, THE DEPT OF STATE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO GIVE STATUS REPORTS OF THE VESSEL'S POSITION AS AVAILABLE FROM ROUTINE RADIO BROADCASTS FROM THE SHIP. NO OTHER INFO SHOULD BE PROVIDED UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED.

VIII. PERSONNEL. CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY OF A LOW PUBLIC PROFILE, MRS. TAFT WILL NOT BE PRESENT ON GUAM DURING THE OPERATION. HOWEVER, MR KEELEY WILL BE IN GUAM AND WILL BE THE TOP OFFICIAL TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE AND MEDIA GUIDANCE.

I. DIPLOMATIC ACTION. GUIDANCE WILL BE PROVIDED TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS DESCRIBING THE OPERATION FURTHER AND FURNISHING APPROPRIATE MATERIAL WITH WHICH TO RESPOND TO OTHER GOVT'S QUERIES.

UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVING THIRD COUNTRIES, SUCH AS AN UNSCHEDULED LANDING IN THE PHILIPPINES, WILL BE HANDLED BY STATE THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

X. STATEMENT FOR RELEASE AT TIME THUONG TIN ONE SAILS FROM GUAM. QTE ON SEPT 30, MRS JULIA VADALA TAFT, DIRECTOR OF THE INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE FOR INDOCHINA REFUGEES, ANNOUNCED THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVT HAD DECIDED TO ACCEDE TO THE URGENT PLEAS OF SEVERAL HUNDRED REPATRIATES ON GUAM TO RETURN TO VIETNAM ABOARD A VIETNAMESE SHIP ANCHORED AT GUAM. THAT SHIP, THE VIETNAM THUONG TIN ONE, DEPARTED GUAM TODAY, OCT DASH DASH DATE. AT DASH DASH HOURS GUAM TIME WITH DASH DASH PERSONS ABOARD.

THE DECISION OF THE REPATRIATES TO RETURN RESTED ENTIRELY WITH THEM. PRIOR TO THEIR EMBARKATION EACH REPATRIATE OR HEAD OF REPATRIATE HOUSEHOLD WAS INTERVIEWED TO CONFIRM THEIR DECISION TO RETURN ABOARD THE SHIP. THE PROCESSING AND DEPARTURE WERE OBSERVED BY REPS  
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PAGE 05 STATE 243384

OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS (AND/OR THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES.)

IN ACCEDING TO THE REPATRIATES' REQUEST TO RETURN BY THIS MEANS THE UNITED STATES HAS TAKEN ALL FEASIBLE STEPS TO ASSURE THE SAFETY OF THEIR RETURN. THE US NAVY HAS INSPECTED THE VESSEL TO ASSURE ITS SEAWORTHINESS, AND HAS PROVISIONED AND FUELED IT FOR THE VOYAGE. AN ADDITIONAL INSPECTION WAS PROVIDED BY THE LLOYDS REP ON GUAM. A CREW OF FORMER VIETNAMESE MERCHANT MARINE AND NAVY PERSONNEL, ORGANIZED BY THE REPATRIATES, HAS CONDUCTED SHAKEDOWN CRUISES TO FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THE VESSEL AND ASSURE THAT THEY ARE UP TO ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF READINESS. THE SHIP HAS BEEN PROVIDED WITH NAVIGATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIP OF NORMAL MARITIME STANDARDS TO ASSURE THAT IT CAN REPORT ITS PROGRESS AND REQUEST ASSISTANCE IF NECESSARY. THE UNITED STATES WILL OF COURSE ASSIST THE VESSEL AT ANY TIME ASSISTANCE IS REQUESTED.

SOME REFUGEES IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES AND ON GUAM WHO HAVE REQUESTED REPATRIATION DID NOT ELECT

TO RETURN ON THE THUONG TIN ONE. WE HAVE ASKED THE  
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO CONTINUE  
TO ACT ON THEIR BEHALF TO ASSIST THEM--AS WELL AS ANY  
OTHERS WHO MIGHT IN THE FUTURE DECIDE TO GO BACK--IN  
RETURNING TO VIETNAM. END QTE KISSINGER UNQTE KISSINGER

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